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ABSTRACT

The dropout rate is one of the most critical issues that Canadian educators face. Based on a 3-year study in the greater Toronto area, this book established a new frame of reference for understanding the dropout dilemma. This book suggests that race, class, gender, and other forms of social difference can affect how education is delivered. For black students, whose dropout rate is disproportionately high, race is a key element in disengagement. Interviews were conducted with more than 150 black students, including actual dropouts, over 2 years. Focus group interviews were also held. The narratives of these students tell about their experiences with the Toronto school system and, in some cases, their reasons for leaving school. The study also included interviews with teachers, administrators, and a sample of nonblack youth. The book includes the following chapters: chapter 1, "Introduction"; chapter 2, "Research Methodology"; chapter 3, "The Social Construction of a 'Drop-out': Dispelling the Myth"; chapter 4, "Understanding Student Disengagement"; chapter 5, "Intersections of Race, Class, and Gender"; chapter 6, "Authority, Power, and Respect"; chapter 7, "Streaming and Teacher Expectations: Social Change or Reproduction?"; chapter 8, "Curriculum: Content and Connection"; chapter 9, "Framing Issues of Identity and Representation"; chapter 10, "The Colour of Knowledge: Confronting Eurocentrism"; chapter 11, "Family, Community, and Society"; and chapter 12, "Visions of Educational and Social Change." Nine appendices present interview guides and study instruments. (Contains 193 references.) (SLD)

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